

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 12, 13, 15, 16, and 18-28 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, Applicant amends Claims 12, 15, 16, 18, 21-23, and 26 and cancels Claims 14 and 17.

Applicant appreciates the Examiner's indication that Claims 17 and 26-28 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the features of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicant filed an Information Disclosure Statement on July 18, 2008. Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner include an initialed and signed Form PTO/SB/08a with the next Office Action indicating that the reference cited therein has been considered.

Claims 18 and 23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, for allegedly being indefinite. Applicant has amended Claims 18 and 23 to correct the informalities noted by the Examiner. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

Claims 12-16 and 18-24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Shibahara (U.S. 2004/0196119). Claim 25 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shibahara in view of Taguchi (U.S. 5,592,135).

Applicant's Claim 12 has been amended to include the features recited in allowable Claim 17 and intervening Claim 14. In addition, Claims 15, 16, and 26 have been amended to be dependent upon Claim 12.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that the rejection of Claims 12-16 and 18-24 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Shibahara, and the rejection of Claim 25 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shibahara in view of Taguchi are moot.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that Claim 12 is allowable. Claims 13, 15, 16, and 18-28 depend upon Claim 12, and are therefore allowable for at least the reasons that Claim 12 is allowable.

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In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and prompt allowance are solicited.

To the extent necessary, Applicant petitions the Commissioner for a One-Month Extension of Time, extending to September 1, 2008, the period for response to the Office Action dated May 1, 2008.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account No. 50-1353.

Respectfully submitted,

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